

Message Text

PAGE 01 DUBLIN 00816 221552 Z

43

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SUBJ: PM COSGRAVE SPEECH ON ISLAND- WIDE RECONCILIATION

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PM COSGRAVE' S SPEECH ON
RECONCILIATION THROUGHOUT ISLAND OF IRELAND. SUMMARY
AND COMMENT SEPTEL.

SPEECH BY THE TAOISEACH, MR. LAIM COSGRAVE, T. D., AT A MEETING
OF THE BLACKROCK BRANCH OF FINE GAEL IN THE TOWN HALL, BLACKROCK,
CO. DUBLIN, ON THURSDAY, 21 ST JUNE, 1973, AT 8 P. M.

AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND ARE PREPARING
FOR ELECTIONS. ON 28 JUNE THEY WILL CHOOSE MEMBERS OF A NEW
ASSUMBLY. WHO EXACTLY WILL BE CHOSEN TO SIT IN THIS ASSEMBLY AND WHAT
THE STRENGTH OF VARIOUS POLITICAL GROUPINGS WILL BE, IS NOT YET
CLEAR. BUT ALREADY MERELY BY THEIR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE PART IN THESE
ELECTIONS THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTH GIVE EXPRESSION TO AN EVEN MORE
BASIC DECISION WHICH TYE HAVE ALREADY MADE - THAT OF ELECTORAL ACTION
RATHER THAN VIOLENCE, OF POLITICS RATHER THAN DESTRUCTION AND
DEATH.

WE ALL SPEAK CONSTANTLY OF " THE MAJORITY" AND " THE MINORITY" IN
NORTHERN IRELAND. BUT IN THIS REGARD AT LEAST THERE IS NO DOUBT AS
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PAGE 02 DUBLIN 00816 221552 Z

TO WHO IS THE MAJORITY. THIS IS A MAJORITY IN A DEFFERENT SENSE, A
MAJORITY WHO HAVE A VITAL COMMON INTEREST TRANSCENDING OTHERWISE
DEEP POLITICAL DIVISIONS - A MAJORITY FOR PEACE. THEY WANT NO MORE OF
THE DEADLY MIXTURE OF RUTHLESSNESS AND INCOMPETENCE EXPRESSED

AGAIN IN THE BOMBINGS IN COLERAINE LAST WEEK; THEY WANT AN END TO SECTARIAN MURDERS AND INTIMIDATIONS; AN END TO INNOCENT DEATHS - WHETHER OF BUS DRIVERS IN EAST BELFAST OR CHILDREN IN ANDERSONSTOWN.

WE MUST DO ALL WE CAN TO ENCOURAGE AND HELP THIS GREAT MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION WHO HAVE CHOSEN POLITICAL ACTION IN PREFERENCE TO VIOLENCE, TO PERSEVERE IN THAT DECISION AND WORK THROUGH THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. WE MUST DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO ENSURE THAT THOSE WHO SEEK TO DISRUPT THIS BASIC CHOICE - BY VIOLENCE AND THREAT OF WAR AGAINST THE IRISH PEOPLE, NORTH AND SOUTH, OR BY KILLING AND MAIMING IRISH MEN AND WOMEN OF TODAY IN THE NAME OF IRISH MEN AND WOMEN OF THE PAST - WILL NOT PREVAIL.

THE GOVERNMENT HERE WILL DO EVERYTHING OPEN TO US ON THESE MATTERS.

WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO AT THIS CRUCIAL PERIOD TO HELP TO PROMOTE PEACE IN THE NORTH?

IN A DEBATE IN THE DAIL LAST MONTH I SET OUT MY VIEW OF THE PROBLEM AS A WHOLE AND THE APPROACH WHICH I BELIEVE IS REQUIRED. NORTHERN IRELAND IS A DIVIDED COMMUNITY BECAUSE TWO APPARENTLY INCOMPATIBLE ASPIRATIONS EXIST WITHIN ITS POPULATION. TO SATISFY EITHER ASPIRATION DEFINITELY NOW WOULD BE FINALLY TO FRUSTRATE THE OTHER. BOTH COMMUNITIES KNOW THIS. EACH SEES THAT A DEFINITIVE SETTLEMENT WOULD FINALLY CONFIRM ONE OR OTHER COMMUNITY AS A PERMANENT MINORITY - IN THE ONE CASE IN A UNITED IRELAND; IN THE OTHER, IN A NORTHERN IRELAND PERMANENTLY ACCEPTED AS PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. THE EXPERIENCE OF FIFTY YEARS IN ONE CASE, AND THE INSECURITY OF THE PAST FOUR OR FIVE YEARS IN THE OTHER, HAVE SHARPENED THE ISSUES FOR BOTH SIDES AND AGGRAVATED THE FEAR OF EACH THAT IT WILL BE THRUST PERMANENTLY INTO A MINORITY POSITION.

THE RESULTS IS A CHRONICALLY UNSTABLE SOCIETY WHERE SOME PERSONS ON EITHER SIDE IN VARYING NUMBERS ARE COMMITTED TO OPPOSING OR THREATENING TO WRECK ANY SETTLEMENT.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 DUBLIN 00816 221552 Z

IS THERE ANY WAY OUT?

IF A BROAD AND GENUINE CONSENSUS TRANSCENDING COMMUNITY DIFFERENCES COULD NOW EMERGE AS A BASIS FOR A DEFINITIVE SETTLEMENT, I FOR ONE WOULD WELCOME IT. BUT SUCH A BROAD CONSENSUS SEEMS UNLIKELY AT PRESENT. SO IT IS NECESSARY TO WORK TOWARDS IT BY SEEKING TO PROMOTE RECONCILIATION AS THE ESSENTIAL PRELIMINARY BASIS FOR A SETTLEMENT. THIS IS MORE LIKELY TO BE A GRADUAL PROCESS RATHER THAN A SINGLE EVENT. THE GREAT NEED THEREFORE IS FOR POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS THAT WILL FAVOUR AND ENCOURAGE THIS PROCESS.

RECONCILIATION CALLS FOR A GROWING RECOGNITION OF COMMON INTEREST

TRANSCENDING PAST BITTERNESS AND DIVISION. THIS IS NOT A PROCESS THAT CAN BE CONFINED TO THE NORTH NOR CAN BE UNDERTAKEN SUCCESSFULLY WITHIN THAT AREA ALONE. QUITE APART FROM THE FACT THAT RECONCILIATION BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH IS FOR ONE OF THE TWO NORTHERN COMMUNITIES ONE OF ITS DEEPEST ASPIRATIONS, THERE IS ALSO THE FACT THAT TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO PARTS OF IRELAND, AND FEARS OF THE NORTHERN COMMUNITY DERIVING FROM THIS TENSION, HAVE BEEN AN IMPORTANT FACTOR UNDERLYING MUCH OF THE NORTHERN TRAGEDY.

ONLY IF WE ARE PREPARED TO APPROACH THE WHOLE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN GENUINE FRIENDSHIP AND WITH A SINCERE CONCERN OF THEIR TRAGIC PROBLEMS, CAN WE HOPE TO LAY A FOUNDATION FOR RECONCILIATION WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND ITSELF. ONLY IF THE SUSPICIONS AND FEARS, WHICH OWE PART AT LEAST OF THEIR EXISTENCE TO PAST ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS, CAN BE ALLAYED, AND TRUST AND CONFIDENCE RESTORED BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH, CAN WE REALISTICALLY EXPECT TRUE PEACE TO RETURN TO THE NORTH. WE HAVE THE DUTY, AND THE OPPORTUNITY, TO MAKE SUCH A CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND, AND NO CONSIDERATIONS OF PRIDE, OR INSTINCT OF SELF- RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST BE ALLOWED TO STAND IN THE WAY OF DOING SO.

IN THUS STRESSING THE PART WE CAN AND MUST NOW PLAY IN RECONCILIATION IN AND WITH THE NORTH, I AM NOT SUGGESTING THAT WE SHOULD FORGET OR DENY OUR ASPIRATION TO SEE REFLECTED IN THE POLITICAL

SPHERE ONE DAY, WITH THE CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND, THE UNITY WE HOPE WILL COME; A UNITY THAT, DESPITE HALF- A- CENTURY OF BLUNDERS AND MISTAKES, STILL EXISTS IN SUCH SPHERES AS THE CHURCHES, UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 DUBLIN 00816 221552 Z

THE ORGANIZATION OF TRADE UNIONS, SPORTING ORGANIZATIONS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

WHAT IS MOST NEEDED TODAY, I BELIEVE, IS A CONSCIOUS EFFORT BY ALL OF US TO CEASE TRYING TO IMPOSE ON EACH OTHER OUR PARTICULAR CONCEPTS OF THE KIND OF IRELAND THAT WILL EVENTUALLY EMERGE FROM THIS TURMOIL. WE ARE ALL STRUGGLING TO BREAK FREE FROM THE SHACKLES OF THE PAST; LET US NOT IMPOSE NEW RIGIDITIES ON OUR PRESENT HOPES.

IF, AS WE BELIEVE, THERE MUST BE A RECONCILIATION NOT ALONE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH, BUT ALSO BETWEEN THE SHATTERED COMMUNITIES WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND, WE MUST BE PREPARED TO PLAY OUR PART IN ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SYSTEM OF INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE NORTH THAT WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO ITS PEOPLE, OF BOTH COMMUNITIES. THIS MEANS THAT WE MUST BE PREPARED ON OUR PART TO WORK WITH ANY SYSTEM OF JOINT GOVERNMENT IN WHICH VALID REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH COMMUNITIES ARE PREPARED TO WORK TOGETHER IN THE INTERESTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND. WE MUST BE PREPARED TO RECOGNISE THE RIGHT OF THE TWO COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND TO SET ASIDE THEIR DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE EVENTUAL SHAPE OF IRISH POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, AND TO ESTABLISH

INSTITUTIONS THAT WILL PROVIDE THE NORTH WITH A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT
DESIGNED TO RECONCILE THE TWO COMMUNITIES IN PEACE AND HARMONY.
WE CHALL NOT BE FOUND WANTING IN THIS REGARD. MY GOVERNMENT IS
PREPARED TO MEET AND DISCUSS MATTERS OF COMMON INTEREST EITHER WITH
THE POLITICAL GROUPS IN NORTHERN IRELAND PRIOR TO THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF A NEW EXECUTIVE THERE, OR WITH THAT EXECTUVIE AFTER IT HAS BEEN
ESTABLISHED BY AGREEMENT AMONST PARTIES REPRESENTING BOTH
COMMUNITIES, AND, OF COURSE, WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ALSO.

WE SHALL ENTER SUCH TALKS WITHOUT PRE- CONDITIONS, IN ORDER TO SEE
HOW BEST TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THE ISLAND OF IRELAND. WE SHALL
HAVE PROPOSALS TO MAKE AS TO HOW WE BELIEVE THE PEOPLE OF THIS
ISLAND CAN BEST ORGANIZE THOSE ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE CARRIED ON IN
THE COMMON INTEREST OF BOTH PARTS OF THE COUNTRY - FOR EXAMPLE,
EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL TRANSPORT, ENERGY, TOURISM, INDUSTRIAL AND
EXPORT DEVELOPMENT, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

I HAVE ALREADY INVITED THE INTER- DEPARTMENTAL UNITY ON NORTHERN
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PAGE 05 DUBLIN 00816 221552 Z

IRELAND AFFAIRS TO E

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